

**COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

<b>Academic School / Department:</b>	Communications and the Arts
<b>Programme:</b>	Art and Visual Culture
<b>FHEQ Level:</b>	5
<b>Course Title:</b>	Looking at Museums: Memory and Display
<b>Course Code:</b>	ARTS 5101
<b>Total Hours:</b>	160 (Lev 3-5) (4 US Credit)
Timetabled Hours:	45
Guided Learning Hours:	15
Independent Learning Hours:	100
<b>Credit</b>	16 UK CATS credits 8 ECTS credits 4 US credits

**Course Description:**

This course is designed for students with an interest in art, visual culture, and careers in museums, heritage and cultural industries. Lessons will explore the nature of museums and galleries as well as their past and present purpose, role and function in society as meaning-making enterprises.

In-class lectures will be paired with regular visits to the rich intercultural collections of local museums, galleries and heritage sites. These off-site trips are designed to offer students a unique opportunity to more directly engage with the meaning of objects and displays, while at the same time learn about a wide range of museum practices revolving around curatorship, education, conservation, management and design. Students will also meet curators, education officers, gallerists and other professionals, thus gaining a solid grounding for specific careers and professional figures in the museum and cultural sector.

**Prerequisites:**

40 Credits

**Aims and Objectives:**

- Explore the realities and working practices of a wide range of museums, galleries, heritage and cultural organisations.
- Demonstrate insight into the nature and role of museums as historic sites as well as producers of culture, meaning and learning.
- Demonstrate a hands-on understanding of a wide range of practices and skills related to museums, galleries, heritage and cultural organisations.
- Present key ideas and current debates about museums and heritage (curatorship, learning and education, audience development and engagement, conservation, ethics and sustainability, etc.).
- Confidently analyse art, objects and displays from various angles such as those of meaning, memory, identity, gender, race, and ethics.
- Critically explore the impact of globalisation and decolonialisation on the museum and heritage sector.

**Programme Outcomes:**

5AII, 5BI, 5CI, 5DI

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the archive maintained by Registry and found at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

### **Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical engagement with theories and concepts used in arts and visual cultures, particularly as relates to museums and other heritage and cultural institutions and spaces.
- Demonstrate critical understanding of the key problems and issues addressed in arts and visual cultures within the context of museums and other heritage and cultural spaces.
- Demonstrate the ability to formulate and communicate arguments cogently, retrieve and generate information, and select appropriate criteria to evaluate sources and/or data
- Demonstrate both critical reflection on ethical principles in the research process and broader discipline, and self-reflection for the capacity of criteria-based evaluation of work within the heritage, arts, and cultural contexts.

### **Indicative Content:**

- Museums, galleries, historic houses, temporary exhibitions, and private and artist-run organisations.
- Rising typologies of museums (sculpture parks, open-air museums, private and corporate museums, etc.).
- Curatorial practices: past, present and future.
- Cultures of display and forms of framing devices (meaning and memory)
- How to mount a temporary exhibition.
- Learning through interpretation.
- Ethics in museums (examples: private sponsorship; retention vs repatriation; illicit trade; unverified provenance).
- Sustainability and the impact of tourism on fruition, conservation and the environment.
- Museums as sites of social change.
- Decolonising the museum.
- Technology, digitization of collections and the digital museum environment.

**Assessment:**

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

**Teaching Methodology:**

This course envisages a combination of weekly tutor-led seminars, workshops and activities; visits to relevant museums, libraries, archival collections, artist's studios, etc. as well as guided independent study. Students are asked to prepare course materials ahead of each class or field trip, actively engage in class, conduct oral presentations, and produce written assignments based on independent research. The course also typically includes one or two guest lectures by a field specialist.

**Indicative Text(s):**

Ambrose, T. and Paine, C. (2018) *Museum Basics*. 4th ed. UK: Routledge.

Barker, E. (199) *Contemporary cultures of display*. USA: Yale University Press.

Berger, J. (1972) *Ways of seeing*. UK: Penguin.

Dean, D. (1994) *Museum exhibitions: Theory and practice*. UK: Routledge.

E. Hooper-Greenhill, E. (2000) *Museums and the interpretation of visual culture*. UK: Routledge.

Janes, R. R. (2023) *Museums and societal collapse: the museum as lifeboat*. UK: Routledge.

Macdonald, S. (2022) *Doing diversity in museums and heritage: A Berlin ethnography*. USA: Columbia University Press.

Merriman, N. (2023) *Museums and the climate crisis*. London: Routledge.

Plankensteiner, B. (ed.) (2018) *The art of being a world culture museum*. Berlin: Kerber Verlag.

Schubert, K. (2022) *The curator's egg: the evolution of the museum concept from the French Revolution to the present*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Ringhouse.

**Journals**

Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies. Available at: <https://jcms-journal.com/>  
(Accessed: November 2024)

Conservation Perspectives. Available at:  
[https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications\\_resources/newsletters/](https://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/newsletters/)

Museum & Society

<https://journals.le.ac.uk/index.php/mas/index>

The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum

<https://onmuseums.com/journal>

**Websites**

<https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/decolonising-museums/resources/>  
<https://www.museumplanner.org/museum-journals/>

Websites of the major international museums and galleries

Example: <https://www.metmuseum.org/toah>

See syllabus for complete reading list

**Change Log for this CSD:**

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services
First edition document	Nov 2024	